



State Board of Equalization

# News Release

**Vice Chair Michelle Steel**

**3<sup>rd</sup> District – Rolling Hills Estates**

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## **California Gasoline Consumption Fell 2.7% in March, Diesel Dropped 6.9%**

*California's Average Price for Both Gas and Diesel Hit \$4 in March*

Michelle Steel, Vice Chair of the California State Board of Equalization (BOE), today announced state gasoline and diesel consumption figures for the first quarter of 2011 and for March. In California, gasoline consumption declined 2.7 percent in March and declined 0.1 percent in the first quarter. Diesel fuel consumption declined 6.9 percent in March and declined 5.3 percent in the first quarter.

In March, gasoline consumption decreased 2.7 percent to 1.24 billion gallons of gasoline compared to 1.27 billion gallons of gasoline in March last year. In California, the average price of a gallon of gasoline rose 90 cents to \$4.00 in March, a 29 percent increase compared to the average price of \$3.10 per gallon of gasoline last year in March. Nationally, the average price of a gallon of gasoline was up 79 cents to \$3.62 per gallon in March, a 28 percent increase over the average price of a gallon of gasoline of \$2.82 in March last year.

Gasoline consumption in the first quarter declined 0.1 percent with a total of 3.57 billion gallons of gasoline compared to 3.58 billion gallons of gasoline in the first quarter last year. In California, the average price of gasoline per gallon rose 60 cents to \$3.66 in the first quarter, a 20 percent increase over last year's average price of \$3.05 per gallon in the first quarter. Nationally, the average price of gasoline rose 58 cents to \$3.34 in the first quarter, a 21 percent increase over last year's average price of \$2.76 per gallon of gasoline in the first quarter.

In March, diesel consumption totaled 218.7 million gallons, a decrease of 6.9 percent compared to the total of 234.9 million gallons of diesel in March last year. In California, the average price of a gallon of diesel fuel was up \$1.13 to \$4.19 per gallon in March, a 37 percent increase over the average price of a gallon of diesel of \$3.06 last March. Nationally, the average price of a gallon of diesel was up 99 cents to \$3.91 in March, a 34 percent increase over the average price of a gallon of diesel of \$2.92 last March.

Diesel consumption in the first quarter decreased 5.3 percent to 586 million gallons compared to 619 million gallons in the first quarter last year. In California, the average price of diesel fuel in the first quarter rose 85 cents to \$3.85, a 28 percent increase compared to \$3.00 price per gallon of diesel last year in the first quarter. Nationally, the average price of diesel fuel in the first quarter was \$3.63, a 27 percent increase over the last year's first quarter average price of \$2.85 per gallon of diesel.

In March, diesel consumption would have been higher were it not for the impact of an unusually large refund related to audits. Gasoline and diesel fuel figures are net consumption that includes the State Board of Equalization's audit assessments, refunds, amended and late tax returns and the State Controller's Office

refunds. The State Board of Equalization is able to monitor gallons through tax receipts paid by fuel distributors in California. Figures for April are scheduled to be available at the end of July.

To see all monthly, quarterly and annual reports, visit [www.boe.ca.gov/sptaxprog/spftrpts.htm](http://www.boe.ca.gov/sptaxprog/spftrpts.htm).

Taxable gasoline gallons: [www.boe.ca.gov/sptaxprog/reports/MVF\\_10\\_Year\\_Report.pdf](http://www.boe.ca.gov/sptaxprog/reports/MVF_10_Year_Report.pdf)

Taxable diesel gallons: [www.boe.ca.gov/sptaxprog/reports/Diesel\\_10\\_Year\\_Report.pdf](http://www.boe.ca.gov/sptaxprog/reports/Diesel_10_Year_Report.pdf)

Elected to the Board of Equalization in 2006 and re-elected in 2010, Michelle Steel serves as *Southern California's elected taxpayer advocate*. In December 2007, Steel discovered the Board of Equalization had delayed the return of millions of dollars in security deposits owed to California businesses. Procedures were changed due to Steel's decisive leadership. Following her investigation, the tax agency refunded tax security deposits to over 5,500 small businesses. To date, over \$100 million in security deposits have been returned to taxpayers.

The five-member California State Board of Equalization (BOE) is a publicly elected tax board. The BOE collects more than \$48 billion annually in taxes and fees supporting state and local government services. It hears business tax appeals, acts as the appellate body for franchise and personal income tax appeals, and serves a significant role in the assessment and administration of property taxes. For more information on other taxes and fees in California, visit [www.taxes.ca.gov](http://www.taxes.ca.gov).

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